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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [KDEM](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: SHIA INDEPENDENT MEMBERS DISCUSS GOVERNMENT
FORMATION

REF: BAGHDAD 1055

Classified By: Acting Political Counselor Michael J. Adler for
Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) Shia Independents and Council of Representatives (CoR) members Dr. Haider Karim al-Suweidi (no. 8 on List 555 in Babil), Muhammad Izz al-Din al-Khateeb (no. 1) Wasit), and Taha De'ra al-Saadi (no. 1) Diyala) met with PolOff and PolFSN March 27. In the first part of the meeting, they criticized the March 26 Ur raid (reftel).

12. (C) When the discussion switched to government formation, Al-Khateeb said he did not know the details of the negotiations, but he did know the general attitudes and outlines of the Shia Coalition position. He said the Shia Coalition is defending the election results, the Constitution, and the principle that those who committed crimes against the Iraqi people should not participate in the government. Dr. al-Suweidi added that the Independents are meeting weekly to discuss developments and to reach conclusions on views for the Independent bloc leaders to take back to the Shia Coalition. Al-Khateeb affirmed that it is a good sign that Dr. Hussein al-Shahristani speaks in the name of the independents and the Shia Coalition. He says this enhances cooperation within and outside the Coalition. Al-Khateeb said the independents have no policy agenda and only want to tell everything and relay the suffering of the people. (COMMENT: It is unclear whether the three politicians' lack of detailed knowledge reflects their indifference to the government formation process, their confidence in the Shia Coalition leadership, the top-down nature of the negotiations, or a combination of all three. END COMMENT)

13. (C) BIONOTES. Dr. Haider Karim Fahad al-Suweidi has a PHD in Semitic languages and is a professor and vice-dean at the University of Babil. He is the nephew of Ali al-Tamimi, spokesman for "MARAM" -- the group of parties that protested the results of the December 2005 election. He says he was arrested three times) in 1982, 1986, and 1991, and spent a total of two years in prison where he was tortured. Muhammad Izz al-Din Muter al-Khateeb has a bachelors degree in accounting. He was a member of the Wasit Provincial Council and Deputy Governor in the same governorate before his election to the CoR.
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